

Safe Disposal of Vaccines, Sharps Containers, and other Regulated Waste			
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Division:	All		

## **PURPOSE**

To provide safe and clear guidance on disposal of vaccines, sharps containers and regulated waste.

The following guidance should be followed for safe disposal of vaccines, sharps containers, and other regulated waste in any clinic or clinic activity during daily functions and emergency events.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Disposal Training for Staff**

The Biohazardous Waste Training thru Stericycle is required for anyone who handles or transports waste or sharps to the Vermont Department of Health Department Lab (VDHL). This online training is free, but you do have to register. The training takes about 60 minutes to complete. Individuals will need to register through MyStericycle at <http://mystericycle.com/register>. To register, a person will need the VDHL's account information: Account #8059035 and address: 359 S Park Dr, Colchester, VT 05446. Once registered for the site, participants need to go to the Online Training Center to see the available courses. Individuals must take the Biohazardous Waste Training. Once registered, individuals should receive an email. There is a post-test after the training that must be passed with at least 80%. Individuals can take the exam over until they get at least 80%.

In the training section of the MyStericycle.com there is a Scores and Certificates tab that will allow a person to view and print the certificate and grades which will need to be filed in their training file. If you have a large group, it is possible to do a group class instead of having individuals do it online. If the training is done by a group, please use a sign in sheet that includes the date of the training as well as printed and signed names for individuals participating. Completed certificates must be scanned and sent to Joyce Oetjen at the VDHL. She will need to sign the certificate and then will send it back for the individual to keep on file. Group training should scan the certificate and the sign in sheet and send to Joyce Oetjen and include a note regarding that a group training occurred. This training must be done every calendar year.

**Vaccine Disposal** – In Vermont, live or attenuated vaccines are considered regulated medical waste. To help assure that appropriate disposal of empty vials occurs please dispose of **all** empty vaccine vials in regular waste/trash bags. Opened expired vials of vaccine should be disposed of in medical waste bags. **No vaccine vials should be put into sharps containers for disposal.**

Surplus and outdated vaccines should NOT be discarded as regulated waste. Please follow Immunization Program guidelines for removal of outdated or compromised vaccine.

**Epinephrine Vial Disposal** - Full and partially full epinephrine vials should be disposed of in medical waste bags.

**Expired Sharps Disposal** - All expired sharps (needles, syringes or blood collection sets) need to be taken out of their packaging and appropriately placed in sharps containers before being transported to the VDHL for disposal.

**Sharps Containers and Autoclave Bags of Regulated Waste Disposal** - Full sharps containers and regulated waste bags can be disposed of via the VDHL. The following steps are **required** when sending sharps containers and bags of regulated waste to VDHL:

1. The VDHL requires advance notice before materials are sent to them. Inform the Lab at 802-338-4724. That number will be answered by the front desk. You need to ask to speak to someone who can authorize the delivery of sharps for disposal.
2. All syringes, needles, lancets, cuvettes, blood drawing holders, and sharp cutting objects should be in rigid containers (preferably red sharps containers). Use packing tape to secure lid to container after locking the opening.
3. All medical waste bags should be transported in a box or other firm packaging. If leakage is possible a second container, that is closable and would contain all contents and prevent leakage during handling, storage, transport, or shipping is required.
4. Non-sharp items that are expired but unused, may be permissible to transport for disposal in the original packaging. The original packaging must be secured to prevent any leakage during handling, storage and transport.
5. All materials being shipped to the lab for disposal must be labeled as outlined below
  - Date sent
  - Contents
  - District Office of origin
  - Contact person at District Office and phone number
  - Expected and Estimated arrival time at the VDHL
  - Biohazard label

It is permissible for employees to transport regulated waste to the lab for disposal.

Transportation of materials to be properly disposed of by any non-Health Department source requires consultation with VDHL to assure delivery and they must adhere to the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources' Disposal of Regulated Medical Waste guidelines.

**Guidelines for Transportation by a Health Department Employee:**

1. Waste will be in a closed container; sharp containers will be taped shut.
2. Containers will be placed in a second container or box which can be securely closed.
3. The inner and outer container should be labeled with a biohazard sticker.
4. When transporting non-regulated waste, the weight of one or more inner packaging's, may not contain more than 0.5 kg (1.1 lbs.) or 0.5 L (17 ounces), and an outer packaging containing not more than 4 kg (8.8 lbs.) or 4 L (1 gallon); or a single inner packaging containing not more than 16 kg (35.2 lbs.) or 16 L (4.2 gallons) in a single outer packaging.<sup>2</sup>
5. When transporting regulated medical waste, a combination packaging must consist of one or more inner packaging's, each of which may not contain more than 4 kg (8.8 lbs.) or 4 L (1 gallon), and an outer packaging containing not more than 16 kg (35.2 lbs.) or 16 L (4.2 gallons).<sup>2</sup>
6. Container for transport should be put in the trunk of a car or in a location in the car that the material can be secured. Material should be placed in a location that will not impair driving.
7. Employees transporting regulated waste will have read this document, be familiar with the Health Departments BBPEC plan, be aware of what material they are transporting and have taken the Stericycle Biohazardous Waste Training.
8. Employees transporting regulated waste will be offered the protections of Division's Exposure Control Plan under 1910.1030 of the VOSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Rule.
9. When dropping off at VTHL use the loading dock entrance. Once at the loading dock you will need to pick up the phone there which will ring costumer service. Once you explain why you were there, they should forward the call to someone who can meet you take the container(s) from you for disposal.

**References:**

1. Disposal of Regulated Medical Waste: Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, <https://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wmp/SolidWaste/Documents/RegulatedMedicalWasteProcedures2018.pdf>
2. § 173.6 Materials of trade exceptions: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/49/173.6>

When transported by motor vehicle in conformance with this section, a material of trade (see § 171.8 of this subchapter) is not subject to any other requirements of this subchapter besides those set forth or referenced in this section.

(4) A Division 6.2 material, other than a Category A infectious substance, contained in human or animal samples (including, but not limited to, secret, excreta, blood and its components, tissue and tissue fluids, and body parts) being transported for research, diagnosis, investigational activities, or disease treatment or prevention, or is a biological product or regulated medical waste. The material must be contained in a combination packaging. For liquids, the inner packaging must be leakproof, and the outer packaging must contain sufficient absorbent material to absorb the entire contents of the inner packaging. For sharps, the inner packaging (sharps container) must be constructed of a rigid material resistant to punctures and securely closed to prevent leaks or punctures, and the outer packaging must be securely closed to prevent

leaks or punctures. For solids, liquids, and sharps, the outer packaging must be a strong, tight packaging securely closed and secured against shifting, including relative motion between packages, within the vehicle on which it is being transported.

(i) For other than a regulated medical waste, the amount of Division 6.2 material in a combination packaging must conform to the following limitations:

(A) One or more inner packagings, each of which may not contain more than 0.5 kg (1.1 lbs.) or 0.5 L (17 ounces), and an outer packaging containing not more than 4 kg (8.8 lbs.) or 4 L (1 gallon); or

(B) A single inner packaging containing not more than 16 kg (35.2 lbs.) or 16 L (4.2 gallons) in a single outer packaging.

(ii) For a regulated medical waste, a combination packaging must consist of one or more inner packagings, each of which may not contain more than 4 kg (8.8 lbs.) or 4 L (1 gallon), and an outer packaging containing not more than 16 kg (35.2 lbs.) or 16 L (4.2 gallons).

(4) The operator of a motor vehicle that contains a material of trade must be informed of the presence of the hazardous material (including whether the package contains a reportable quantity) and must be informed of the requirements of this section.

(e) Other exceptions. A material of trade may be transported on a motor vehicle under the provisions of this section with other hazardous materials without affecting its eligibility for exceptions provided by this section.

#### Combination packaging

Combination packaging means a combination of packaging, for transport purposes, consisting of one or more inner packagings secured in a non-bulk outer packaging. It does not include a composite packaging.